

4<sup>th</sup> Edit<sup>n</sup> 1700

# T H E Compleat Mother.

O R

An Earnest Perswasive to all  
Mothers (especially those of  
Rank and Quality) to Nurse  
their own Children.

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*A partu statim excipit lactandi cura. Atque hic quidem erat omni Machinarum genere pugnandum adversus Pravam consuetudinem, sed mirum quam vulgo receptam, quâ Matres Infantulos suos conductitiis mulieribus tradunt nutriendos. Erasim. de Matrimonio Christiano. p. 398.*

*Nil tam præter Naturam, quam ut Mulier quod genuit, recuset alere. Idem Eras. ibid.*

*Sine eam totam, integram esse Matrem sui Filii.*

Permit her to be the whole Compleat Mother of  
her Son. *A. Gell. Noct. Att. l. 12. c. 1.*

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Palatine of *Chester*.

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L O N D O N,

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ac D. D. Johanni Div.  
Provid. Archiep. Cant.  
à Sacris Dom,*

**Aug. 18. 1694.**

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*Cons. Lib. Johannis Gutierrez de Godoy; Cui Titulus, Quod officium Matris sit Infantum nutrire. Juriscons. in Ato*

*Forgh. Lib. 28 fol fin. p. 773, 775.*

T H E

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## T H E INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. **C**ustom like an impetuous Torrent makes its way through the firmest Inclosures, and furiously throws down all the Bulworks of Laws, and the most Sacred Obligations that obstruct its passage. Like a mighty Tyrant it usurps upon Truth and Duty, and awes all into a Compliance with its violent Government. Men live (as *Seneca* observes) not by *Reason* but by *Imitation*; whence it comes to pass, that they fall upon one another by heaps, as so many Blind-men into a Ditch. It were easie to instance in many things, strangely unreasonable, which being recommended by Custom, have passed not only without

*De beata  
vita. c. 1.*

B

Con-

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Controle, but with Applause. I wish there were not too many *popular Vices* in our own Nation, to prevent the labour of such an undertaking; Vices, which though they have nothing to justify them besides their Commonness, have even by that alone been able hitherto to baffle the most vigorous Attempts against them. To mention no more, how many good Laws have been made, how many rational and elaborate Discourses have been published both from the Pulpit and the Press against *Common Swearing, Intemperate Drinking, Black-mouth'd Perjury* and *Bloody Revenge*? And yet with little other effect hitherto, than to give us so many the more Instances of the Triumphs of *Brutish Custom* over Reason and Religion: And to convince us that all such Attempts are as hopeless, as for one

Luk. 14. 31 *with ten thousand, to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thou-*

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*thousand*: Where the Assailant is more likely to be condemned for his *Rashness*, than applauded for his *Courage* and *Resolution*.

§ 2. It may then be justly wondred at, how I come to be so daring, as to oppose my weak Arms against such a mighty Current, or to undertake the controlling of a Custom, which hitherto hath prevailed against all endeavours of Authority, Reason and Eloquence far greater than I can pretend to: This I mean of *Mothers declining to Nurse their own Children, and putting them off to Strangers*. *Annius Minutius* the Roman Censor, is said to have took notice of it as a strange Prodigy in his time, extremely ominous to *Rome*, that a Roman Lady refusing to Nurse her own Child, gave Suck to a Puppy, that her Breasts might with more safety be dried up by artificial Applications. But it is a thing too common, to pass for a Prodigy

*Ladies  
Calling,  
Part 2.  
Sect. 2.  
§. 28.*

among us (though I fear not less fatally ominous) for Persons of the best Quality to run the greatest Hazards, and submit to the most unhandſom Methods for drying up their Suck, rather than to become Nurſes to their own Children. And I find a moſt refined Pen (than whom none in this Age could have been more likely to have ſucceeded, if either Reaſon, Eloquence, or a more charming ſtrain of extraordinary Piety be of any force) declining to attack this prevailing Cuſtom, through meer Deſpair of convincing by any thing that could be ſaid.

§ 3. But upon mature Conſideration, I can find no reaſon why Impudence and Obſtinacy ſhould protect any Sin from a juſt Re- proof: Nor can I think it a juſtifiable piece of Modeſty to decline the defence of a good Cauſe, meerly for the Multitude and Confidence of its Opponents. It was  
brave



brave in the Stripling *David* to assault the monstrous Gyant with his Sling and a few Stones; and the Success was answerable to his Courage. And why may not I (relying on the same God) hope for as good Success from these my slender Endeavours, since the Cause I undertake, though it deserve the best, is sufficient to give Victory to the meanest Advocate? Leaving therefore the Event to God's Providence, I am encouraged to assault this stubborn and inveterate Custom,

1. By an hearty Compassion for the Infants which suffer by it.

2. For a necessary Vindication of those few honourable Ladies who have had the Vertue and Courage by their Practise to confront it.

3. And by the Sense of my own Duty, as a Clergy-man, to appear against the Luxury of the Age.

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§ 4. For the first: I am not ashamed to own a peculiar Inclination in my self, to love and delight in the Conversation of little Children, among whom I have always found a most agreeable Diversion. Nor need I, since our Blessed Lord himself gave encouragement to bring such little ones to him, was pleased to take them in his Arms, and to propose their Innocence to our Imitation. And as this hath induced me to spend all my vacant Hours among Children for their Improvement, as well as the gratifying of mine own Inclinations; so it makes me the more Impatient at all those, who betray any Aversion, or are guilty of any Unkindness toward them. And since the Children of our Nobility and Gentry are justly reputed to be the Hopes of the next Generation, it is reasonable to be most concern'd for them; who in their Infancy generally are more Unhappy than the



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the Sons of *Country Peasants*. The *Poor Tenants Child* is for the most part nursed in its *own Mothers Bosom*, and cherished by her Breasts, whilst the *Landlord's Heir* is turn'd out, exil'd from his Mothers embraces as soon as from her Womb, and assigned to the Care of some Stranger, who hath no other Endearments toward it, than what are owing solely to her Interest. And such as work for Wages, are usually not so careful how they do their Work, as to get their Stipend; nor is a Mercenary Nurse much concerned how the Infant Improves, provided she have a good place of it. Thus the Infants of the best Families are most hardly used, and vast numbers of them *undoubtedly destroyed*. And sure I need not despair of Pardon even from those Ladies who are most concerned in the ensuing Reproof, since it is the result of my real and hearty Compassion for their dear Children.

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§ 5. Besides Secondly, I have observed, that those Ladies, who contrary to this prevailing Custom, have undertaken the Nursery of their own Babes, have oft met with unhandſom Reflections and bitter Taunts from others of the contrary Practiſe, which makes the Vindication of them a neceſſary piece both of Juſtice and Charity. A Lady that will condeſcend to be a Nurſe, though to her own Child, is become as Unfaſhionable and Ungenteel, as a Gentleman that will not Drink, Swear and be Profane; but dares be out of Faſhion in leading an exactly vertuous and ſober Life. And if ever you ſaw the Modeſty of ſuch an one aſſaulted by the Railery and Scorn of a Company of Debauchees, when he happens to fall among them: You may imagine the need thoſe few Ladies have of Courage and Reſolution, who by Nurſing their own Children, expoſe themſelves to  
the

the Taunts and Derision of *the many*, who decline that Office, and look upon themselves to be upbraided by their Examples.

§ 6. And when I observethose few Ladies, who best discharge their Duties, exposed to the Scoffs of such as neglect theirs; and on the other hand, reflect on the Unhappiness of those poor Infants, whose Mothers make it a Puntilio of State to cast them off to the Care of Strangers, I cannot but believe it a good Office, and a few hours well bestowed, to attempt the Vindication of the *best Mothers*, and to plead (with those that are otherwise) the cause of those helpless *Innocents*, who are not able, unless in their inarticulate cries, to speak for themselves. Especially

§ 7. Since thirdly, the consideration of my own Obligations, as a Clergyman, encourage me in this undertaking. For in the Book entitled,

*Reformatio Legum Ecclesiarum*, Cap. 13. De Matrimonio.

*sticarum*, which was composed by eight Bishops (whereof Archbishop *Cranmer* and Bishop *Ridley* were two) eight Divines, and as many Civil and Common Lawyers, in pursuance of an Act of Parliament, and intended for the Government of the Reformed Church of *England*, and the Rules of Ecclesiastical Courts, I find this passage. “ A Custom too soft and  
 “ delicate hath prevailed among  
 “ Wives, to discard their Off-  
 “ spring from their own Breasts,  
 “ and hire them out to be nursed  
 “ by Strangers; which thing for  
 “ *the most part* being without any  
 “ *probable Causes*, but only from  
 “ an over-indulgent Fondness of  
 “ their own Bodies, it comes to  
 “ pass, that to ease themselves,  
 “ they shuffle off the *Honourable*  
 “ and *Natural* Pains of educating  
 “ their own Children; and since  
 “ this *inhumane and degenerate*  
 “ *Slothfulness* of Mothers is the  
 “ cause of many Evils, we think  
 “ it

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“ it the *Duty of Preachers* to ex-  
hort Mothers not to desert their  
“ Off-spring which they have  
“ borne, nor to deny those the  
“ benefit of their Breasts, whom  
“ they lately nourished in their  
“ Womb, and sustained with their  
“ own Bowels. Now since our  
Reformation after it was brought  
to good Perfection in respect of  
Worship and Doctrine, was hin-  
dred by the Death of King *Ed-  
ward* from receiving the Consum-  
mation which was intended in re-  
spect of Church-Government and  
Ecclesiastical Laws; *this Book*,  
which gives us the most authen-  
tick account what was intended,  
cannot but be of great Authority  
with all that value the Judgment  
of our first Reformers. So that I  
may from this conclude, not only  
that it is every *Preachers Duty* to  
exhort Mothers to Nurse their  
own, but also that it is the Duty  
of Mothers to comply with their  
Exhortations, and that if they do  
otherwise,

otherwise, they betray an unjustifiable Contempt of these learned and pious Reformers of and Martyrs for our Holy Religion.

§ 8. To these Motives of my present undertaking I will add one more, viz. *The hopes of routing this unnatural Custom, and doing a deal of good thereby.* I am sure I have a very good Cause, and all the strength of Reason and Religion on my side, and the Impulses of Nature to boot. I have also the more courteous and tractable Sex to deal with, who I may promise my self, cannot all be obstinate against the Evidences of their Duty, and the Inclinations of Natural Affection. And why should I despair of rescuing so great a part of Mankind from the Tyranny of an impudent Custom, who seem ready to accept of Liberty, and to wait for some kind Deliverer to unloose their Fetters? Shall I doubt of a candid Reception from that Sex, whom Nature hath



hath molded for Courtesie, and the Impressions of Religion and Compassion? Especially since, as *Themistocles* is said to have prevailed in his Addresses to *Admelus* King of the *Moleffi*, by bringing the King's Son in his Arms, I bring their own Children with me to second my Persuasions by their prevailing Intercessions, or indeed not so much to intercede for me, as to Petition for themselves.

§ 9. But if any rebellious Lust, if Luxury, Pride or Avarice dare to appear against me, I have the Ensigns of Divine Authority to awe them, Evidences I mean from the Holy Scriptures and the Law of Nature to command their Submission. And though those Books are said to be most fatally Destructive, which convince of Duty and yet fail of persuading to it; yet what I have to propose, seems to me so likely, not only to convince, but also to persuade, that

I hope it will do no harm but Service to the World. To conclude this Introduction, though these Reasons prevailed to engage me to compose the ensuing Discourse, yet for some Months I kept it by me, and could not persuade my self to publish it, till I met with his Grace the Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury's* Sermons about the *Education of Children* lately publish'd; wherein he recommends *this as the first and most natural Duty incumbent on Parents toward their Children*; and argues against the general neglect of it, *as one of the great and crying Sins of this Age and Nation.* And when I found my self backed by *such* Authority, I became incapable of fearing any Senfures, or despairing of good Success.



CHAP. I.

*Wherein the Case is briefly stated, and all those Texts of Scripture alledged which relate to it : Together with the Arguments and Inferences which result from them.*

§ 1. **I**T will not be necessary to spend much time in any elaborate stating of the Case, which I have undertaken. For it is agreed on all hands, that where there is a *natural Inability* or *any bodily Infirmities* in the Mother (*real and not meerly pretended*) that might have a *pernicious Influence* on her Nursery, God who by his Providence hath caused those Impediments, doth in such cases dispense with this Duty.

§ 2. So that this is the Case, *Whether all Mothers, be their Quality what it will, who are neither disabled by any natural Defect, nor contracted Infirmary, are bound in Duty*

*Duty to give Suck themselves to their own Children.*

This I affirm, and shall endeavour to evince both *from the Holy Scriptures* recommending it as a Duty, the *mischievous Consequences* of neglecting it, and the *Insufficiency of all the usual Plea's*, which are made for such neglect. Which three general Heads shall limit my ensuing Discourse.

§ 3. I begin with the *Holy Scriptures*. And because I intend all possible plainness, without the Affectation of any artificial Method, I shall offer some Passages to Consideration in the same order as they lye in our Bibles, and make some obvious Remarks upon them, and such Inferences as they will fairly bear, as I proceed.

§ 4. And to begin with the *Old Testament*, the first passage we meet with to this purpose is in *Gen. 21.7.* where Sarah saith, *Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given Children Suck?*

*Suck? For I have borne him a Son in his Old Age. We have Sarah a Nurse as well as a Mother, though she were the Wife not of a mean Peasant, but of a mighty Prince; a Prince so Potent, that the neighbouring Kings courted his Alliance. A Prince abounding in Wealth and Power, the Master of a numerous Family, out of which he could number 318 Men fit to bear Arms, and all born in his House. Now the Wife of such an one could not want Conveniencies among so many Child-bearing Women that were in her Family, for the Nursing of her Son by another; she might have pleaded either State or Business to have excused her self from the Employment; especially being grown into years, which made her less able to undergo the Fatigue of such an Office; and having Beauty beyond what was ordinary at her Years, the decay of which, by the Toil and Watchings incident to a*  
C Nurse,

Nurse, she might have fairly pleaded. But waving all these Plea's, she includes it her Duty to Nurse the Fruit of her own Womb. For her words imply so much, *Who would have said to Abraham, that Sarah should have given Suck? For I have borne him a Son*, q. d. It is, I doubt not, the Mothers Office, who *bears* the Child, to give it *Suck*; since then I have *borne Abraham* a Son, I must give it *Suck* and *Nurse* it for him. Had it been usual in those times for vertuous Mothers to decline this Office, she would not have inferred her *Nursing* a Son for *Abraham* from her *bearing* of one; whereas the one implying the other intimates a necessary Consequence of the one from the other. And I do with the greater Confidence urge this Argument, because it is St. *Ambrose's* Note on this Verse, *The Moral use of this is, that Women are provoked to remember their Dignity, and to give Suck*

De Abrah.  
l. 1. c. 7.

to their Children. This is the proper Grace, the Honour of a Mother, whereby she may recommend her self to her own Husband. However this is certain, that this Pious Mother whom the Apostle proposes as a Pattern to her Sex, and exhorts all Wives to *imitate, that will do well,* <sup>1 Pet. 3. 6.</sup> and discharge Faithfully the Duties of their Relations, she not only Nurses her Son her self, but plainly intimates, that she thought it her Duty to do so; though she might have pleaded as many Excuses as most of them can who decline this Office. They then that neglect the Duty, and have no better Pretences for such their neglect, than those which she waved as insufficient, are faulty at least on this account, that they refuse to imitate *Sarah*, whom the Apostle tells Wives they must follow, if *they will do well.*

§ 5. The next Text is in *Gen.* <sup>Gen 49. 25</sup> 49. 25. where the Patriarch *Jacob* having foretold the numerous in-

crease of the Tribe of *Joseph*, that  
 Gen. 49. 22 like a *Fruitful Vine, whose Branches*  
*spread over the wall*, it should mul-  
 tiply into two Tribes; he assures  
 him that the God who had pre-  
 served and prospered him, not-  
 withstanding his many Afflictions  
 from his Brethren at first, and the  
 V. 25. *Egyptians* afterward, should *Bless*  
*his Posterity with Blessings of Hea-*  
*ven above, Blessings of the Deep, that*  
*lieth beneath, Blessings of the Breast*  
*and of the Womb, i.e.* He would pro-  
 vide for him an Inheritance, fer-  
 tile and well watered with Foun-  
 tains and Rivers, and a numerous  
 Posterity to enjoy it. Where it is  
 to be observed, that the Blessings  
 of the *Breast* and of the *Womb* are  
 conjoyned, and a Promise made  
 to this Tribe, that in order to its  
 Increase, the Wives should be  
 Fruitful to bear, and Careful to  
 Nurse their own; that God would  
 bless it with such Women, as both  
 would bear a numerous Off-spring  
 and nourish their own Off-spring  
 with



with their own Breasts. Whence the Inference is obvious, that as a *Fruitful Wife* is a *Blessing*, so when she *Nurses* her Children she is a *double Blessing* to a Family. And as it is the Duty of every one to be as great a Blessing as she can be to her Family, so such Women must need be faulty, who after God hath given the *Blessings of the Womb*, refuse to compleat the Felicity by the *Blessings of the Breast*. The *ten thousands of Ephraim, and the thousands of Manasseh*, are the effects of these Blessings of the Breast and of the Womb; and intimates to us, that it is a likely way to obtain a numerous Posterity, such as *Joseph's* was, for *Fruitful Mothers* to become themselves *Careful Nurses*.

Deut. 33.  
17.

§ 6. In *Exod. 2. 7, 8.* when *Pharaoh's Daughter* sends to seek out for a Nurse for *Moses*, whom she found exposed, her Maid called *the Child's Mother*, and to her she committed the little Nursery. Now this may be considered,

Exod. 2.  
7, 8.

either as the Act of the Royal Princess, the Contrivance of the Mother, or a Dispensation of Divine Providence. If we suppose that *Pharaoh's* Daughter sent on purpose to enquire out the Mother of the exposed Infant, we may conclude, she thought her the fittest to Nurse it. If it be rather thought, that the Mother laid her Daughter to watch and be ready if any such occasion should happen, to call her rather than another, we have a commendable Instance of her Pious and Tender Concern for her Son, and earnest desire to Nurse it her self, rather than any other should ease her of that Burden, and do that work for her. But if besides either the Princess or the Mothers Intention God by his wise Providence determined the Messenger to apply herself to the Mother rather than any other Woman; we have the plain Determination of God himself, that the Mother is fittest to Nurse



Nurse her own Child, and that it was best for this Infant, whom he intended for *extraordinary Service*, to have the advantage of the most *suitable Nurse*. And it is further observable, that tho God would have *Moses* trained up in Learning by the Egyptian Doctors, that he might be better qualified for the great Charge he was hereafter to undertake, yet he would not have him Suck Milk from an *Egyptian Nurse*, which might have some bad Influence upon his Constitution and his Manners.

§ 7. Numb. 11. 12. *Moses* thus expostulates with God, *Have I conceived all this People? Have I begot them? (\* or brought them forth) That thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy Bosom, as a*

\* ילדהו is as properly spoken of the Mother as of the Father. And Conception being peculiar to the Mother, it seems more reasonable to render it in Analogy thereto. *Have I brought them forth?*

\* There is no word in the Original for *Father*, only the Participle יֹנֵן is Masculine; which yet the 72 render by *τιθυυς* which for the most part is Feminine, and signifies a *Nurse*. And considering that frequently in Hebrew one Gender is put for another, it may well be rendred a *Nurse* here, as more suitable to *Conception* and *bringing forth* in the clause foregoing.

*Nursing Father* (or \*as a *Nurse*) beareth the *Sucking Child* to the *Land*, which thou *swarest unto their Fathers*. Where *Moses's* Argument stands upon this Foundation, that whosoever hath conceived and brought forth, ought to become *Nurse* to the *Sucking Child*,

and carry it in her Bosom. Unless this be granted; his Argument is invalid and nothing to the purpose, the whole force of which seems to depend on that Supposition. Judge then whether is more reasonable to charge *Moses* with an Absurdity, or those Women with an Immorality who neglect the Duty, which he takes for granted. He thought himself not obliged like a *Nurse* to bear that froward People in his Bosom, because he had not conceived them

nor

nor brought them forth. Thereby evidently implying, that the Mother who hath conceived and brought forth the Infant, ought (however froward it may be) to become its Nurse, and Suckle it in her Bosom.

§ 8. If we turn over to *1 Sam.* *1 Sam. i. 22, 23.* we find, that after *Hannah* by her Prayers had obtained a Son, she resolves to lay aside all other business, that she might attend this important one, the Nursing of her *Samuel*. She was a Woman of great Piety, who constantly went with her Husband to the Sanctuary at the Feasts. Yet knowing how much God prefers Mercy before Sacrifice, she resolves to do so too; staying at home to Nurse her Son, as what she apprehended more acceptable to God, than to appear at his Tabernacle with an Offering, and leave her Child at home to some Mercenary's Care. Whence we may conclude, that even the Pretences of Piety, which  
of

Bunting's  
Travel of  
Patriarchs

of all others are the most plausible, are not sufficient to excuse Mothers from this piece of Charity; and that if their Nurlery should detain them for that time from a constant Attendance on God's publick Worship, he will in such a case dispence with their absence, and accept their Charity toward their Infants instead of Devotion to himself. Persons of Quality indeed may have such assistance, that there can be no necessity of their confinement from Gods House, especially since none of them but are much nearer to a Church than *Ramah* was to *Shiloh*, which is computed to be twelve Miles, so that ordinarily they cannot have that Plea to make. Yet if any be in such Circumstances, that either the publick Worship of God or the Nursing her Child must be neglected, she hath here a president to determine the case in favour of Charity against the specious Objections

ctions of Devotion. And it is further observable, that *Hannah's* Nursing of her first Son, was so far from hindring Fertility, that it rather procured a Divine Benediction, which multiplied her Posterity *to three Sons and two Daughters*, sufficient to rescue her from her Rivals Taunts, and rank her in the Catalogue of fruitful Mothers. So vain is that popular Pre-  
tence, that Nursing is an Impediment to Fruitfulness, and to be declin'd by great Persons for the better securing of Succession by a numerous Posterity; for if those bear faster who dry up their Breasts, they that Nurse their Children commonly bear longer, and bring more up to an Healthful Maturity; which comes to pass, partly through their greater Care, and partly through Gods Blessing on their exemplary Piety.

§ 9. There is a Story in *1 Kings* <sup>1 Kings 3. 21.</sup> of two Women of an infamous Character, being stiled  
*Harlots*;



*Harlots*; nor will I take the advantage some Interpreters give me, to soften that Denomination into Victuallers; but will suppose them to have been bad Women, yet observing something remarkably good in one of them, it is the more to be took notice of. Now it is evident that the one of these Harlots was a tender Mother, though she had been an unchast Woman, and loved her Child very well, however she came by it; and it is recorded of her, that she her self gave it Suck. Which is an Argument, that though she had not Vertue sufficient to secure her Chastity, yet she was not so overgrown with Vice, as to have obliterated Natural Affection. The better of these two Harlots hath the Character of a *Fond Mother*, and her pleading before King Solomon, that she *rose to give her Child Suck*, is an Intimation that this was a Duty of good Esteem in those days, and that it would

would make something for her that she had done so. And how can those Mothers pretend Affection to their Children, who attain not to the Tenderness of this good-natur'd Harlot?

§ 10. In the Book of *Job*, c. 39. *Job* 39.16 there is an elegant Description of the *Ostriches* stupid neglect of her young ones, wherein this is especially took notice of, That *she hardened her self against her young ones, as though they were not hers.* Whereby the Spirit of God intimates it to be an Aggravation of Hard-heartedness to deal hardly with those that are *young*, especially where natural Relation obliges to a tender Regard: And that the nearer any come to resemble the *Ostriches* Obduracy, in neglecting to take care of their Offspring, the more unnatural and cruel they may be justly deemed. And if it be a piece of Hardship to turn off a tender Infant to a Mercenary Nurse (as I doubt

doubt not but in the sequel of this Discourse will be manifest) those Mothers must be accounted more *Unnatural* than the *Ostrich*, because they have not so much Stupidity.

*Psal.* 22. 9. *¶* 11. In *Psal.* 22. 9. the Psalmist says, *Thou didst make me hope, when I was upon my Mothers Breasts.* Now hope is an act of Reason, not to be exerted by an Infant not yet arrived to the Exercise of Reason, yet here in a Poetical stile attributed to such an one; to intimate, that the Care God takes of Infants, and the early Provision he hath made for them, by filling their Mothers *Breasts* as soon as they have left her *Womb*, is an Argument that Mankind is under the Care of God's Providence, and of sufficient force to engage *even Infants* to hope in God, if they were capable. And hence it is evident, that it is the Intention of the God of Nature, in furnishing the Mother with full Breasts, to oblige



oblige her to minister thereby to his Providence for the Preservation of her Child. Moreover the Psalmist's using such a Phrase as this, doth not only imply that he was nursed by his own Mother, but also that it was usual in those days, for Mothers themselves to perform that Office. The Practise of our Age would scarce allow us to express the time of *Infancy* by *hanging on the Mothers Breasts*, wherein so few enjoy that Privilege. And if we grant that such Idioms of Language are founded on the prevailing Customs of Nations, we may conclude from this Phrase (and that of *Solomon's*, who expresses a *Brother* Periphrastically, by one that *sucked the Breasts of his Mother*) that it was in those days very common, and accounted most reasonable, that the Mother should Nurse at her Breasts all the Children she had born in her Womb.

Cant. 8. 1.

§ 12. The Prophet *Jeremiah* exaggerates the Extremity of Famine in *Jerusalem* by this Circumstance, that it had made Mothers Cruel to their Infants, and uncapable of giving them Suck,

*Lam. 4. 23.* *Lam. 4. 23.* Even the *Sea-monsters* draw out the Breasts, they give Suck to their young ones ; but the Daughters of my People is become Cruel, like the *Ostriches* in the *Wilderness*. It's true, it seems to be not so much from the *Hardness* of their *Hearts*, as of the *Times*, that the Daughters of *Jerusalem* do not that for their Off-spring, which the very *Sea-monsters* do for theirs, and which no Creature on the Land is so much a *Brute* as to neglect, except the *Ostrich*, whose stupidity is such, that she leaves her Eggs in the Sand and takes no further care of them, no nor of her young ones neither, after the heat of the Sun and of the Sand hath hatched them. And nothing certainly, but the Extremity of Famine, could make

make the Daughters of *Jerusalem* so Cruel, that *no Monster at Sea, no Brute on Land*, can parallel them, except the *Ostrich*. How then can they excuse themselves, who neglect their Children as much *out of Luxury*, and in the *midst of Plenty*, as those *Israelites* did *through Famine*? The Prophet thought this an Instance fit to exaggerate the great Misery of a Famine, that it constrained Mothers to that which Nature most abhors. We may then reasonably conclude, That he would have passed a very severe Censure on those Mothers that become Cruel in the midst of Plenty; and for that very reason too, because they abound with Plenty. They are more unnatural than Sea-Monsters, that draw out their Breasts to their young ones, whilst these turn theirs off to some mean and Mercenary Neighbour.

§ 13. I shall conclude my Observations out of the Old Testament, with that passage of the Prophet *Hof. 9. 14.* Give them, O Lord, What wilt thou give them? Give them a *miscarrying Womb* and *dry Breasts*. For whether he pray for this as a *Blessing* for Israel, that they may not be more *miserable* (in the common Slaughter of their Country) for *their Fertility*, as our Lord Christ pronounces such comparatively Happy in the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, that were *barren* and had never borne, and whose Paps had never given Suck. Or whether he denounce it as a *Curse*, that their Women should be Barren and punished with a *miscarrying Womb* and *dry Breasts*; which way soever we understand it, it affords us this Conclusion, that the Spirit of God in the Scriptures makes *dry Breasts* as well as a *miscarrying Womb*, the Periphrasis of *Barrenness*; thereby declaring it equally

Luke 23.  
29.

qually unnatural for a Mother by artificial Applications to *dry her Breasts*, as to *force Abortions*; and that where God gives a fruitful Womb, he expects ordinarily that the Breasts should give Suck. God gives dry Breasts as a Curse to some, as an Affliction to others; but they that invite that, whether Curse or Affliction, to themselves by voluntary Applications, *love not Blessing*, therefore *it shall be far from them*.

Thus have I lead you through the Old Testament, and shewed you the laudable Examples it gives Mothers for Nursing their Children, and the plain Intimations (at least) of the Divine Pleasure, that they should do likewise.

§ 14. I proceed to set before you such passages of the *New Testament* as are of the same Importance, and furnish us with some Proofs of the case proposed.

Luke 11.  
27.

In the Gospel we read of a Woman, who in a Rapture of Admiration at Christ's Discourses, cries out, *Blessed is the Womb that bare thee, and the Paps which thou hast Sucked.* Which shews that she took it for granted, that the Mother of our Lord gave him Suck. And upon this evidence, and because we find that *Joseph* in his Flight with his Holy Infant into *Egypt*, took none other with him but the Blessed Virgin, it hath been unanimously agreed, that she was the Nurse as well as the Mother of Christ. And since this Virgin, not only for the Nobility of her Extraction (tho now sunk into a meaner Fortune) but especially for the Purity of her Manners, hath justly been reputed the Glory of her Sex, none can have an Example more worthy of her Imitation.

*Apud Just. Mart. quest. 8. resp. ad Orthod. q. 136. p. 375* God chose not (saith one of the Ancients) any ordinary Woman to be the Mother of Christ, but one that excelled



excelled all other Women in Vertue; whom he therefore pronounces Blessed for her Vertues, for which he vouchsafed her to be his Mother. And such eminent Vertues in this Royal Virgin recommend her as a fit Example for the best and the greatest of her Sex to imitate.

§ 15. In the next place it may be observed, That the Christian Religion hath adopted into Law and Duty, all those things which generally approve themselves to Phil. 4. 8. the unprejudiced Reason of Mankind, to be *things Honest, Lovely, and of good Report.* Things honest (σπουδα) Grave, or becoming Chast I Tim. 3. and Vertuous Matrons. Things Lovely (πρεσβυλα) which are generally Grateful to all wise and vertuous Persons, and apt to procure Love. Things of good Report, which are apt to procure to the Persons that do them, and to the Religion which they profess, good Esteem and Commendation. Now I dare appeal to all the World,

whether those few Persons of Quality and Honour are not generally looked upon with a Veneration and Esteem, who having broke through an unreasonable Custom, and preferred the good of their Children before a Fantastick Privilege of Greatness, become Nurses to their own Offspring. Who doth not approve of this as an Action becoming the *Gravity* of a Chast Lady? In whose Eyes is it not a Spectacle most *Lovely*? What vertuous and sober Persons but think it very Praise-worthy? From this general Precept of Christianity therefore we must conclude this generally to be the Duty of Christian Matrons.

§ 16. That of the Apostles  
 1 Theff. 2. 7. is not here to be  
 omitted. *We were gentle among  
 you, even as a Nurse cherisheth her  
 Children.* Where two things are  
 observable: First, That the Mo-  
 ther is here stiled a Nurse; for it  
 is

1 Theff. 2.  
 7.

Τὸ ἐκτρέφειν  
 τὰ τέκνα.

is *her own Children*, not anothers, whom the Nurse is said to Cherish. Whence it seems, that the Apostle taking it for granted, that the Mother is her self the Nurse, implies it the Duty of all Mothers to undertake that Office. Secondly, That *St. Paul* chooses to express his own mild and gentle Behaviour toward the Church, by a Mother *Nursing her own*. Which implies, that the Mothers Care is the greatest, and her Carriage the most Tender toward her Nursery, who is influenced by Natural Affection, and not meerly by hopes of Reward. It would have been a Disparagement to the Apostles mild and tender Behaviour towards them, to have compared him with a Mercenary Nurse, that looks to anothers Child for hire, and is rarely so careful of it as its own Mother, to whom Nature dictates the most compassionate Concern for its welfare.

§ 17. Hitherto in the next place belongs the Character which the Apostle gives of a *Widow indeed*, who is to be maintained by the Churches Charity. He requires, among other Virtues, that *she be well reported for good Works, and that she have brought up Children.* The Greek word denotes *Nursing Children.* Our Lexicons cite *Aristotle* for the use of it, and it is observable, that he uses the Verb, from which this is compounded to denote this peculiar Office of the Mother in his Oeconomicks, which because it

1 Tim. 5.  
10.

Ἐτεκνο-  
τρέφουσιν  
τρεῖς.

*Arist. Oeco.*

l. 1. c. 3.

Περὶ τέκ-  
νων, τὴν  
τρέφουσιν  
καὶ νύκτωρ,

τὴν δὲ ἀρεσκάν, ἴδιον ὅτι μὴ γὰρ τὸ θρέψαι, ἢ τὸ  
μαρτυρεῖται. And *τεροφωρέω*, Acts 13. 18. is in the  
Margent of our Bibles rendred, *Suffered them, as a  
Nurse beareth the Child.* And by *Dr. Hammond*, *Carried  
them as a Nurse*; who concludes the right reading to be  
*ἐτεροφωρέουσι* from *τρέφω*, to do the Office of a Nurse;  
who not only bears the Child in her Arms, but feeds and  
sustains it too, as God did the *Israelites* in the Wilderness.  
*Τροφός* is also rendred a Nurse in the Text aforecited,  
1 Thess. 2. 7.

tribute

tribute to their Generation; but their Offices are peculiar as to their future Improvement. The Mothers Office is to Nurse, and the Fathers to Educate or Correct. In the Judgment then of St. Paul, those Widows who had nursed their own Children, were reputed to have done a good Work; and they that had not done so, were judged for that very reason unworthy of the Churches Charity. And as we may very well presume, the Apostle would not have exempted any indigent Widow from that Privilege for no Fault; but that it was a thing Scandalous and of very ill report, for any Christian Matron not to have nursed her own Children.

§ 18. I shall only add, That among the Duties of the younger Women, such as are not yet past Child-bearing, they are to be taught, *That they love their Children*, Tit. 2. 4. For if it be considered, that Nursing their own  
Children

Children is a very proper and natural Testimony to *maternal Love*, and the most likely means not only to express but increase their natural Affection toward them; I see not how they can evade the Obligation of this Precept. For the Law of Love obliges a Mother to all proper Means and Ways of testifying and maintaining her Love, and consequently to this. The greatest Ladies are bound to love their Children as well as the meanest Beggar, and consequently to neglect no proper means of shewing and cherishing it: So that unless they deny Nursing of them to be such, they must hence conclude it to be their Duty.

§ 19. But before I put an end to this Chapter, it is requisite that I take notice of some passages which seem to discountenance the Cause I have been pleading for; least my premitting of them should make any to fancy  
it



it was not for the Weakness but Cogency and Weight of the Objection that is raised from them. I mean those Texts which mention some Nurses who were *not the Mothers* of the Children whom they Nursed. Such was *Deborah*, Gen. 35.8. *Rebecca's Nurse*; *Naomi*, who be- Ruth 4.10. *came Nurse* to her Grandson by *Ruth*; *Mephiboseth's Nurse*, who 2 Sam. 4.4. let him fall as she fled; and *Joab's* 2 Kings 11. 2. Nurse that was hid with him.

§ 20. Now in answer to these Instances, I shall only offer these things. 1. That in some cases it is so far from being a necessary Duty, that it is not possible for the Child to be nursed by its own Mother: As if she die in Childhood, or lye under some natural Inability from the want of Nipples or Suck. And in such cases recourse must be had to some other means for the Infants Preservation. And for what appears to the contrary, this may be the occasion

occasion of the Substitution of some of the Nurses abovenamed. *Joash's* Nurse it's probable supplied the Office of his deceased Mother; for his Aunts Care about his Preservation makes it likely, that his Mother was either dead before, or was Murdered in the universal Butchery of the Royal Family by *Athaliah*.

2. Some of those before named were *dry Nurses*, *Assistants* only not *Substitutes* to the Mother: Such doubtless was *Naomi*, whose Age and long Widowhood makes it very unlikely, that she should be able to give her Grandchild Suck. And *Pareus* from *Jacob's* solemn Mourning at the Death of *Deborah*, concludes her to have been called *Rebecca's* Nurse, because she had assisted her in the Nursing of her Children, and not as if she had given her Suck; and that for this reason *Jacob* after his Mothers Death, had taken her into his own Family. 3. If it be granted

granted most probable (as to me it seems to be) that *Mephibosheth's* Nurse gave him Suck, and was substituted in the room of his Mother ; this will be no disadvantage to our Cause. For as it was his great Unhappiness to lose his Mother betimes, so it was a greater, to be committed to such a Nurse, as by her Carelessness (perhaps) made him a Cripple to his Death. Lastly, I cannot upon the whole, remember one Instance out of the Holy Scriptures, of any either good or bad Mother, who did her self deliver her Child to another to Nurse, nor is it probable that any of the Nurses instanced above, were made such by the Mothers of the Children themselves whilst they were living, and therefore they reach not to Patronize their Case, who ordinarily do so.

§ 21. Thus I have given a just and impartial account of the Testimonies of the *Holy Scripture*  
both

both of the *Old and New Testament*, which respect our present subject; and if they have been impartially considered, they must needs have satisfied you, that those Mothers are most conformable to the Dictates of God's Spirit in his Word, who *themselves Nurse their own Children*. And all the Favour I desire of any Mother upon the Survey of the forementioned particulars, is to allow her own Conscience to determine, whether God hath not in his Word plainly enough declared this to be her Duty. And then, I hope, none will be so *Vain or Impious*, as to oppose Custom or the Privilege of her Rank, to such indisputable Authority and plain Convictions of her Duty.

CHAP. II.

*Wherein are manifested the great Mischiefs which Mothers by transferring the Nursing of their Children to other Women, threaten their Families with; both in point of Succession, and that Mutual Affection which ought to be among the several Branches of it.*

§ 1. **M**Y proposed Method leads me now to the second part of my undertaking, viz. To consider and represent the Mischievous Consequences which frequently result from Mothers exposing their Children to be nursed by other Women, and cannot otherwise be so surely prevented, as by discharging this Office themselves. And they either respect the Family or the Child.

First, The whole Family may suffer great prejudice by this unreasonable Custom: And that both in point

point of Succession, and that mutual Affection which ought to be among the several Branches of it, and is necessary to its flourishing Prosperity.

§ 2. 1. *The Families of the Great and the Rich especially are in danger to be injured hereby in the Succession.* None are so much concerned, as Persons of Honour and Estates, to preserve the Succession of both to their own Off-spring, nor are any in so much danger as they to be injured that way. The poor Man needs not fear a Supposititious Brood; for who will be desirous to obtrude a Child on him to inherit Beggary? But if a poor Tenant have a fair Opportunity to thrust her own or Friends Child into the room of her Landlords Heir, or can contrive to make him pass for the Son of a Wealthy Tradesman, it requires a deal of Honesty to withstand the Temptation. Now if it be considered how mutable the

Coun-



Countenance of an Infant is; what Alterations a few days make in the Lineaments of its Face, it may be judged no hard thing to deceive the most Critical Mother after a Months absence. So that either if the Nurse have a mind to, make her own Child, or be hired to make some others a Fortune; or if she have Overlaid her Nursery, and to conceal the Crime, cloath some other about the same Age in its Spoils, perhaps the most curious Inspection may not be able to discern the Cheat. I am sure the boorish and degenerate Rudeness of some, who pass for the Children of very Polite, Ingenious and good humoured Parents, give too much cause to suspect them Changelings. Nor is this a bare Supposition without any Instances, for *Valerius Maximus* tells us, That in the Reign of *Augustus*, one pretended to be the Son of his Sister *Octavia*, affirming,

*Val. Max.  
l. 9. c. 15. 3.*

E

That

That by reason of his great Weakness he had been changed for the Nurse's own Son. It's true the Cheat succeeded not, yet *Othavia's* putting of her Son off to be Nursed by a Stranger, gave an opportunity to attempt it: And perhaps the reason that so few Nurses are detected in such like Attempts, is because they frequently succeed better, being detected only where they fail. Yet one remarkable Instance more there is, How *Arthebar*, or (as others call him) *Artabanus* King of *Epirus* was more successfully imposed on, having his Child changed at Nurse, and the Son of a mean Knight introduced into his Family. Which Treason the Nurse at length, though too late discovering, occasioned a Bloody War, wherein both Pretenders were slain, and the Kingdom itself Usurped by *Alexander* the Brother of that *Olympias*, who was *Alexander* the Great's Mother.

ther. And to prevent such Supposititious Bastardies, *Lycurgus* the Famous *Spartan* Law-giver enacted, That the noblest *Spartan* Women, even their Kings Wives, should at the least Nurse their eldest Son. And *Plutarch* reports, That the second Son of *Themistes* the seventh King of the *Lacedemonians*, succeeded his Father, only because he had been nursed by his own Mother, whereas the eldest had sucked the Breasts of a Stranger. Now as the Mothers Nursing her self is a sure way to prevent any such Cheat of the Nurse; so it is a Security to the Husband, that she hath not her self, to escape the Infamy of Barrenness, consented to the introducing of anothers Child into his Family. And it is the Note of *St. Chrysostom* upon *Gen. 21. 7.* "That therefore *Sarah* gave Suck, "to make it more credible, that "she was truly a Mother, least "any by reason of her Age should

“ have suspected the Child to  
 “ have been Supposititious. For  
 “ the Milk in her Breasts might  
 “ satisfy the most Distrustful,  
 “ that *Isaac* was her genuine Off-  
 “ spring, and that beyond all Ex-  
 “ pectation she was become a  
 “ Mother. Hence I conclude,  
 that the Quality of any Woman  
 is so far from being a reasonable  
 Excuse from undertaking this  
 part in the Education of her Child,  
 that it rather increases her Oblig-  
 ation. For the greatest Care  
 ought to be taken in preventing  
 the Obtrusion of a Spurious Issue  
 on the Families and Successions,  
 where there is the most Danger.

§ 3. 2. I come to shew Second-  
 ly, That as it is necessary to the  
 Happiness of every Family, that  
 there be mutual Indearments be-  
 tween the several Branches of it :  
 So the putting of Children out  
 to be nursed by others, is a very  
 likely way to hinder them, and  
 the contrary to promote them;  
 which

which I shall manifest in these three Particulars, *viz.* In respect of the *Mothers Affection towards the Child*, *The Childs towards its Mother*, and *The Children of the same Parents towards one another*.

§ 4. First, It is very unlikely that those *Mothers*, who transfer the *Nursing of their Children* to others, should ordinarily love them as tenderly as those that make them their own Care. When the Infant is exil'd from its Mothers sight, that warmth of Love, which receives new Vigor from the frequent view of its Object, cools by degrees and languishes; whilst the Interposition of other Objects soon weans her from that poor Exile, who becomes abroad almost as much forgotten, as if it had been laid in the Grave. It is not rare to observe, That Foster-Children are more dear to their Nurses than their Mothers; and Mothers for the most part are fondest of those whom they

*A. Gell.  
l. 12. c. 1.  
ad fin.*

*Ladies  
Calling,  
Part 2.  
Sect. 2.  
§ 26.*

*Plut. in  
Penel.*

have nursed themselves. And it is too common an Observation, That some Ladies shew a greater Fondness toward their Dogs than their Children, "Shewing those "to all Comers, when in many "days Converse one shall hear "nothing, whence it may be "known that they have any "Children. Concerning which we have a remarkable Story in *Plutarch*, How that *Cesar* once seeing some Strangers at *Rome*, who were People of Quality, carrying up and down with them in their Arms and Bosoms young Puppy-dogs and Munkies, and hugging and making much of them, took occasion to ask, Whether the Women in their Country were not used to bear Children. By that Princely Reprimand gravely reflecting upon such Persons as spend and lavish that Affection and Kindness (which Nature hath impleated in us) on Brute Creatures, though it be due and



and owing only to Humane Nature, those of our own Kind. Now there can no account so likely be given of any Womans greater Fondness of Brutes, than of their own Children, but that these being nursed abroad, their Dogs are more conversant with them than they. I must confess (what a Learned Man objects) that many Ladies, who place their Children abroad, are very tender of them, and sometimes more Fond than Women of meaner Birth and Fortunes, who for the most part Nurse themselves: Nor would I therefore be understood to intend the foregoing Censure for all Mothers that decline this Office. In some, nay in many, I hope, Duty and natural Affection triumph over this Temptation. However it is a Temptation that prevails on too many, and they that are Wise, will for that reason conclude it best and safest to avoid it.

*Towerfon  
on the Com-  
mandm.  
p. 237.*

Amb. de  
Abr. l. 1.  
c. 7.

St. *Ambrose* made this Observation, That Mothers generally love those best whom they have Suckled at their own Breasts.

Plut. Πει-  
ραιστικῶν,  
γῆς, p. 3.  
Id. Πει-  
ραιστικῶν  
τὰ ἐκγο-  
να φιλο-  
εργίαι,  
p. 496.

And *Plutarch* concludes this the principal Intention of Nature, in giving the Mother a Capacity of being a Nurse, and in placing her Breasts so conveniently for the embracing of her little Nursery, that she may receive fresh Endearments every Moment from those intimate Embraces.

\* Nay, God  
himself  
supposes  
this apt to  
create a  
great Ten-  
derness in  
the Mo-  
ther, when

\* And if this be granted as a most likely means to increase the Mothers Love to her Child, she that exiles her little ones, takes the way hugely to cool, if not quite extinguish it.

he says, *Isa. 49. 15.* Can a woman forget her Sucking Child, that she should not have Compassion on the Son of her Womb? When the Woman makes the Son of her Womb her Sucking Child, or her own Nursery, it is a thing next to impossible, that she should fail in the Affection and Care of a Mother toward it.

§ 5. Secondly, This is the way  
to alienate the Childs Affections  
from

from its Mother. Some Gramma-  
rians derive the Latin word *Lac*  
(Milk) from *lacio* (to allure) as  
concluding no way so likely to  
allure the Child to love its Mo-  
ther, as Nursing it with her  
Milk. She performs indeed but  
half the Office, and consequently  
earns but *half of that Love* which  
otherwise is due to a Mother  
who only bears her Child and  
then turns it off. And I never  
yet met with any one Instance  
to contradict the Observation of  
a Learned Prelate to this pur-  
pose, viz. *That many cruel Ty-*  
*rants have killed their Mothers, yet*  
*none ever offered Violence to his*  
*Nurse.* And this shews that bear-  
ing in the Womb is not so invi-  
olable an Obligation to Love, as  
Nursing at the Breast. We read  
of one of the *Gracchi* returning  
to *Rome* from his Victories in  
*Asia*, that he presented his Mo-  
ther with a Jewel of Silver, and  
his Nurse with a Girdle of Gold;  
giving

Bishop  
Taylor's  
Grand Ex-  
ample.  
p. 21. § 10.

*Roderic de  
Castro de  
Mulier.  
marita.*

giving this reason for the preference of the latter, That when his Mother, after his Birth, cast him off, his Nurse took him forsaken as he was to her Breasts, and cherished him in her kind Embraces. This is manifest, that Love descends more strongly than it ascends, so that it is not likely that the Childs Affections towards its Parents should exceed theirs towards it. And therefore such a Mother hath reason to expect the least Love from her Children, who hath shewed the least toward them. Perhaps whilst she is in Prosperity, and stands in no need of their Love, Interest may oblige them to carry civilly toward her: Yet it is to be suspected that they have no such grounds in Nature, as will maintain a constant Fervour of Affection against the Frowardness or Misfortunes of an Unnatural Mother. I do not affirm this to be a constant Effect of that Cause, for

for sometimes perhaps the Mothers After-care may make amends for the first Unkindness: Sometimes extraordinary good Nature in the Child may conquer the Resentments of this early Neglect, or the Influences of Divine Grace may triumph over this Temptation. It is enough for my purpose that it is a Temptation, a Temptation which oft prevails on a Graceless Child, to requite his Mothers Rejection of him with the like Unkindness: And this is reason enough to oblige all Mothers to prevent it by their early Care and Tenderness in Nursing.

§ 6. Thirdly, As the Happiness of Families very much depends upon the mutual Love of the several Branches of it among themselves; so the Mothers refusing them that *common Nourishment* which were likely to promote it, is too justly chargeable with the Mischiefs which result from

from their mutual Unkindnesses. We read of *Scipio Asiaticus*, that though he rejected the Importunity of his Brother *Africanus*, in behalf of ten Soldiers who were condemned for offering Violence to the *Vestals*; yet he pardoned them at the request of his Foster-Sister: And being asked the reason why he did more for his Nurses Daughter than for his own Mothers Son, he returned this answer, *I esteem her rather to be my Mother who brought me up, than her that brought me forth and then forsook me.* Which shews both that his Nurse had more of his Love than his Mother, and also her who sucked the same Milk, than he who had lain in the same Womb. I remember *Plutarch* reports of *Cato*, that wise Roman, that as he obliged his Wife to give her Children Suck with her own Breasts, so also to let the Children of his Slaves Suck her too, that by partaking of the same

*Plut. in  
Catone.*



same Nourishment, a Natural Affection might be instilled into them toward his Son. And the frequent Instances of many great Persons Kindness and Liberality toward their Foster-Brothers, is an Argument how prevalent this Method is, of propagating the Streams of Love from the common Fountain of the Breast among all the partakers of it. And the too common Observation of Fraternal Discords, as it is matter of Melancholly Consideration, so it ought to oblige Mothers to neglect no means any way likely to prevent them; especially to joyn them all at her Breasts, that they may be more united in their Lives.

§ 7. Thus have I demonstrated how much the good of *Families* obliges all Mothers, especially Persons of Quality, to Nurse their own Children, that they may more surely prevent all Opportunities of *wronging their own Heir,*  
of

62 *The Compleat Mother.*

*of alienating themselves from their Children, or their Children from them, or from one another.*

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C H A P. III.

*In which is contained an account of the Inconveniencies resulting to the Children themselves that are Nursed by Strangers, in respect of their Bodies, either through the Nurses want of Care, the unsuitable Nourishment, or Contagious Diseases that may be transmitted in her Milk.*

§ 1. **I** Come now Secondly to represent the Mischiefs that threaten the Children themselves, which are deserted by their own Mothers to be Nursed by Strangers.

It is a pretty Observation which St. Ambrose makes on Gen. 9. 25. where Cham's Curse is expressed in his Sons name, *Cursed*  
be

be' Canaan, viz. That it is a greater Punishment to wicked Cham to be Cursed in his Race, than in his own Person. The Wounds which tender Parents receive in the Miseries of their Children, are much more sensible than their own personal Calamities. This Consideration then in all reason should touch all Mothers in the most sensible part, and be of the greatest force with them, viz. That others Nursing of them is likely to be extreamly prejudicial to their Children, both in respect of *their Bodies and their Minds.*

§ 2. I shall in this Chapter shew how *the Health of the Childs Body* is endangered by putting it to a Stranger to be nursed, and that these several ways, Either by *her want of Care in tending it,* by *yielding it unsuitable Nourishment,* or by *transmitting Diseases* to it.

vid. *Doct. de*  
*med. lib. p. 35.*  
*et 105. 94. p.*  
*13.*  
*Carr. Epist.*  
*med. p. 72.*

*De Educ.*  
lib. p. 3.

§ 3. *A Mercenary Nurse is not likely to take so much Care of the Child as its own Mother.* In our Bibles we read of Mephiboseth's Mishap received from his Nurse, who letting him fall out of her Arms as she fled, made him ever after unable to go. And who sees not how many carry about them to their death, the Marks of their Nurses Carelessness? And no wonder, for Natural Affection will make the Mother more watchful over and patient with the Frowardness of her own Babe, than she can expect an Hireling to be. *The Mother is fittest to Nurse, saith Plutarch, because she will treat the Child with more Compassion and Care, as being influenced by an inward Tenderness, which bears date from its first being: Whereas the Love of a Nurse is only Subditiuous, the result not of Nature but of Wages.* It is reasonable to expect the Mistress of the Family more careful of her own  
Domestick

Domestick Affairs, than any of her Mercenary Servants, since the first is obliged by a greater Interest than the latter; so that where the Mistress is Negligent, we do not ordinarily expect the Maid should be more Industrious. And where the Mothers Love can suffer a Child to be exposed, whom Nature hath interested in its Welfare, none can wonder if a Stranger neglect it. For indeed how can it be expected, that an Hireling should endure all the Tedioufnesses and Inconveniences attending the Nursing of a little, helpless, perhaps Froward Infant; when the Mother, to whom Natural Affection should have endeared the Employment, out of Softness and Luxury declines it as a Burden? Or why hath God generally inspired the Mother with a greater Tenderness toward the Child, but for this very end, That thereby she may be enabled to digest more  
F easily

Bishop  
*Taylor's*  
 Grand Ex-  
 ample.

easily the *little Unhandsomnesses* (as one phrases it) which others will nauseate, and submit to those Fatigues that none else will for its Preservation, whilst her Care and Patience are doubled by her Affection? There are frequent Tragical Instances of Infants Overlaid by Sleepy and Careless Nurses, which much more rarely happen, where the Mother undertakes this Province her self. Methinks then it is very reasonable thus to argue, She is fittest to Nurse the Child who loves it best; and if the Mother is not ashamed to have it said, That any Woman should love her Child better than her self, she must be concluded fittest to Nurse it; and she ought to undertake that Office which requires so much Vigilance and Patience, Care and Tenderness, as can be expected only from the greatest Love. Nothing is more common, than for Mercenaries to let the poor Babe Cry  
 it



it self weary without regarding it, whilst the Mothers Ears would have so affected her Heart, as to send her in all haste to quiet it. The Mother ordinarily will spare no Pains to keep it Neat and Clean, whilst Nurses generally are so Negligent, that Nastiness oft breeds Diseases, and the keeping of the Child *Dirty*, is a sure Preludium of its Funeral, *When Dust is laid to Dust, and Ashes to Ashes.*

§ 4. And here I cannot forbear to translate a passage out of a learned Physician, Dr. *Walter Harris*, in his Tract *De acutis Morbis Infantum*, viz. “ That a worthy  
“ Divine, the Rector of *Hayes*,  
“ about twelve Miles from *London*, with great Grief told him,  
“ that his Parish (being large and  
“ populous, and scituate in a very  
“ wholesome Air) at his first coming thither was replenished  
“ with Infants sent abroad to be  
“ Nursed ; yet in the compass of

“ one Year he had buried them  
 “ all except two : And that the  
 “ same number of Nurseries being  
 “ again twice supplied (through  
 “ the Mercenary Diligence of  
 “ those Women) out of *London*,  
 A.D. 1689. “ he had again *this same Year* laid  
 “ them all in their Graves before  
 “ their time. So that by this ac-  
 count, the Citizens seem to put  
 out their Children, not so properly  
 to be *Nursed* as to be *Murdered*.  
 And I see not how they can be  
 thought to have a due regard of  
 their Childrens Lives, who after  
 such fair warning given them by  
 a Physician that Practises among  
 them, and seems peculiarly con-  
 cern’d for the good of Infants, re-  
 solve still to run this Hazard, and  
 prefer their own Ease before their  
 Childrens Life.

§ 5. But if the Child nursed  
 by a Stranger be not killed by  
 her neglect, yet secondly it may  
 be very much injured in its  
 Health by *the unsuitable Nourish-*  
*ment*

ment which it derives from her Breasts. It is agreed upon by ancient and modern Physicians, that the Nourishment which Infants receive in the Womb, is of the same Nature with the Milk, which, soon after the Birth, Nature provides for it in the Breasts. And it is another approved Rule among them, that a sudden Alteration of Diet is oft Fatal, always dangerous, especially to the Infirm and such as are unable to resist any violent Impressions. If then we consider the *waxen Tendernefs* of Infants (to use *Galen's* Expression as well as Argument) and the Moisture of their Constitution, which makes them very susceptible of new Impressions, we must conclude that a change of Diet immediately upon their Birth, is likely enough to have a dangerous Influence upon them. Now there is as great Variety in Constitutions as Faces, and consequently it will be as hard to find a Nurse of

*Galen. de sanit. tu- end. l. 1. c. 7. Avicen. l. 1. Fen. 3. Senner. de curat. inf. part 1. c. 1.*

*Galen. de temper. l. 2. c. 1.*

Galen. de  
 san. tuend.  
 l. 1. c. 7.  
 Avicen. l. 1.  
 Fen. 3. c. 2.

the same Temperament with the Mother, as endued with the same Features. So that the fatal Consequences of Strangers Nursing, may be imputed not always to their Negligence, but sometimes to the great difference in the Constitution of the Mother and the Nurse. For *Galen* peremptorily concludes, That the Child which draws its own Mothers Breasts, uses not only *the most accustomed, but also the most proper aliment for it*: And *Avicenna*, That this it can best digest, and therefore it is most convenient for it; so that if any Indisposition seize on it, the Mothers Breast is most conducive to its Cure. And it is moreover to be observed, That for the most part those Mothers who decline this Office, are of a delicate and finer Mold, and Mercenary Nurses are generally robust and of a courser allay: And though the latter may be the more Healthful, yet her Milk may for that reason be the less

less suitable to the Constitution of an Infant conceived and nourished hitherto in a Body more Fine and Tender. Brown Bread may be strong and wholesome Food, yet not fit to be prescribed on a sudden to an infirm and delicate Stomach, which hath been long inured to Gruels and Pannado's. And if such unsuitable Diet oft prove Fatal to the Adult, there is more reason to fear, lest it never prove otherwise to Tender Infants.

§ 6. But the Danger is much greater, *Lest Mercenary Nurses transmit some desperate Contagion into their Nurseries.* The Mothers Distemper is the most plausible Pretence for her declining of this Office: And all conclude it very reasonable, that in that case she forbear to Nurse, lest her Infant Suck Death from her Breasts whose Womb gave it Life, and she propagate her Diseases to it, together with her Milk, impregnated

with the vicious Qualities of her Blood. But then the Argument is as strong to oblige an Healthful Mother to Nurse, least she should commit it to a Mercenary, infected with some latent Disease.

Dr. Burnet's  
Lect. 4  
p. 248.

The Right Reverend Dr. *Burnet* Bishop of *Salisbury* in his Letters assures us, That one Mr. *Gody* Minister of *St. Gervais* in *Geneva*, had a Daughter then sixteen Years old, who having a Nurse extraordinary thick of Hearing, spake all the little words that Children do at a Year old, but was Deaf at two yearsold. Which he concludes was caused by some Vapor the Nurses Milk was charged with, which was propagated to the Child, when she began to Suck more strongly, and to take greater quantities of that corrupted Nourishment. But this (though a very unhappy Infirmary) is very tolerable, in comparison of what other Infants have by this means been infected with. For there is a Story

in



## The Compleat Mother.

73

in Dr. *Ambr. Parey*, a Famous French Chyrurgion, to this purpose, so remarkable, that I cannot but judge it worthy to be transcribed.

*Par. de  
Luc Ven.  
c. 2.*

§ 7. "A certain very good  
"Citizen of this City of *Paris*,  
"granted to his Wife, being a  
"very Chast Woman, that condi-  
"tionally she would Nurse her  
"own Child (of which she was  
"lately delivered) she should  
"have a Nurse in the House to  
"ease her of some part of the La-  
"bour. By ill-hap the Nurse they  
"took was troubled with the Ve-  
"nereal Disease, wherewith she  
"presently infected the Child, the  
"Child the Mother, the Mother  
"her Husband, and he two of his  
"Children, who frequently ac-  
"companied him at Bed and  
"Board, being ignorant of that  
"Malignity wherewith he was  
"inwardly tainted. In the mean  
"while the Mother, when she ob-  
"served that her Nurse-Child  
"came

*An instance  
not unlike this  
is recorded  
by Botallus,  
de Luc Venor.  
Cap. xx.  
See yet like  
also in Amal.  
Lufitan. Cont.  
1. Cur. 49.  
Forst. de Lu-  
ven. Obs. 2.  
Velsch. Syllog.  
Epifagm. 90.*

“ came not forward, but cried al-  
“ most perpetually, she asked my  
“ Counſel to tell her the cauſe of  
“ the Diſeaſe; which was not  
“ hard to be done, for the whole  
“ Body thereof was replenished  
“ with Venereal Scabs and Puſtles,  
“ the hired Nurſe and the Mothers  
“ Nipples were eaten in with vi-  
“ rulent Ulcers: Alſo the Fathers  
“ and the two other Childrens  
“ Bodies (whereof the one was  
“ three and the other four Years  
“ old) were troubled with the  
“ like Puſtles and Scabs. I told  
“ them that they had all the *Lues*  
“ *Veneræ*, which took its *Original*  
“ *and firſt Off-ſpring by malign*  
“ *Contagion from the hired Nurſe.*  
“ I had them in Cure, and by Gods  
“ help healed them all except the  
“ Sucking Child, which died in  
“ the Cure. But the hired Nurſe  
“ was foundly laſhed in the Pri-  
“ ſon, and ſhould have been whip-  
“ ped through all the Streets of  
“ the City, but that the Magiſtrate  
“ had

“ had a Care to preserve the Credit of the Unfortunate Family.

§ 8. Now if it be considered how common this Disease is in our Debauched Age, we may conclude it is only to be imputed to the Secrecy of Physicians and Chyrurgions, that we have not fresher Instances of this Nature. And this will be sufficient to caution all Mothers that are Healthful, rather than run the hazard of such a Misfortune, to undergo the Fatigue of Nursing themselves. And thus you see how many ways a Mercenary Nurse endangers the Life and Health of your Children. And if it be an antedated Murder, by causing Abortion to hinder the Propagation of a Man, it cannot be a less Crime, after he is born and registred among Christians, to suffer him to die, and contribute any of these ways to his Murder.

## CHAP. IV.

*Wherein are shewed the Mischiefs  
which may be propagated from  
Mercenary Nurses to the Minds  
of Children.*

§ 1. **H**AVING in the former Chapter shewed what Harm a Child may receive in its Body by an hired Nurse, I come in this to represent the *Ill Influences such an one may have on the Mind of her Nursery.* And this (Ladies) will deserve your more Serious Consideration, by how much the Soul of your Child is better than its Body ; especially since by the Improvements or Mis-improvements of the Mind, Persons of Quality become extraordinary Useful or Pernicious. Remember it's not a Plow-man, but a Nobleman or a Gentleman, that may be spoiled, and that two ways, Either by the Diminution  
of

of the Childs Parts, or the Depravation of his Disposition or his Manners.

§ 2. First, *The Nourishment received from the Breasts of a Mercenary Nurse, may debase the Spirit, and diminish the Parts of a Child.*

The Faculties of the Humane Soul in their Operations, depend very much upon the Disposition of the Body in its united State. If then the Temper of the Body may be altered by Diet, the Operations of the Mind may thereby be improved or impaired. Be the Hand never so Skillful, the Musick will not be equally Melodious, when it strikes on a bad, as on a good Instrument. *David* himself, saith one, could not have charmed *Saul's* Melancholly Spirit with the Strings of his Bow, or the Wood of his Spear, as he did with his Harp. If the Soul of a Nightingal were in the Body of an Owl, its Harmonious Warbling would be changed into hideous Screaking :

Bishop  
*Taylor's*  
Grand Ex-  
ample.  
p. 22.

ing: Or if the Humane Soul should, according to the Fancy of *Apuleius*, be lodged in the Body of an Ass, it would not be able to speak or argue rationally, as it doth in the Body of a Philosopher, being condemned to an Instrument not tuned for such noble Harmony. Now whatever Temperament of Body a Child hath received from the Mother, if it be depraved by the Nurse, that Alteration may deprave its Parts, and hugely impair the Operations of its Mind. And when a Sucking Child draws its Nourishment longer from the Body of a stupid Nurse, than it did, whilst an Embrio, from the Substance of an ingenious Mother, there is great reason to fear, least that have a greater Influence in forming its Constitution than this; especially happening whilst it is Young and Tender, and very susceptible of new Impressions.

*Caus. Holy*  
*Court. l. i.*  
*§ 8. p. 29.*

§ 3. *Causin* tells us, That in the History of *Germany* there is a Story



Story of a Child taken in a Forrest, and presented to the Landgrave of *Hesse*, which having been bred among Wolves, learn'd to go on four feet, to Hunt, divide the Prey, and sleep with them, and was in every thing, but his shape, become a perfect Wolf. And may not Ferity and Stupidity be derived from the Breasts of Brutish Women, as well as from Wolves, which if any look upon the preceding Relation as a Fable rather than an History, may pass for the Moral of it.

§ 4. I acknowledge the great Parts and brave Souls of many young Gentlemen, who have run an Hazard in drawing their first Nourishment from strange Nurseries. But it may be these fell into the hands of some, whose Parts and Spirits were above their Fortune: Or perhaps though their Parts be great, yet they might have been more Considerable, had they enjoyed the same Advantages at the Breast

Breast as in the Womb. And any Diminution of their Parts, as well as the total loss of them, is to be deplored; and whatever hath any probable Tendency thereto avoided. Besides there are some Instances of Children in great Families falling infinitely short of their Parents Ingenuity, and every Mother may reasonably fear, lest hers prove another of them, if she venture on this Method for their Education, which in frequent Instances proves Pernicious. It is reported of *Alcibiades*, whose Parts were advanced so far above the ordinary pitch of his Countrymen, that he drew his first Nourishment from the Breasts of a *Spartan* Woman. And the brave Spirits of those Dames made other *Grecians* ambitious to purchase Nurses from *Sparta* for the Improvement of their Childrens Spirit. I leave it therefore, Ladies, to your Consideration, whether it be safe to suffer your Children to Suck  
the

*Plut. in  
Alcib.*

*Id. in Lycur.*

the Breasts of any Woman less Ingenious than your selves, much less such stupid Women, as in respect of Parts and Spirits you would be very loath to have them resemble, least your generous Plants set in a barren and cankered Soil, degenerate and become Unfruitful.

§ 5. But Secondly, It ought further to be considered, *Whether the Suck of a Mercenary Nurse may not corrupt the Dispositions of the Infants Soul, and deprave its Manners.* For whosoever impartially considers it, will find great reason to fear, least the Child imbibe the Nurses ill Conditions, together with her Milk. Though Vertue is a Supernatural Perfection, added to our Nature in this State of Depravation by the Influences of Divine Grace, yet some Inclinations to it may be owing to the Temper of the Body, and propagated by a Communication of Spirits in the Nourishment. Much more may

G

Vicious

*Cart Epist.  
M.A. p. 72.*

Vicious Dispositions, which are Natural, and depend more upon the Temper of the Blood and Spirits. The Peevishness, the Lust, the Pride, the Stubbornness or Baseness of a Nurse, receive great Encouragement from the Constitution of her Body, which being in some measure propagated to her Nursery, gives it also a great and Unhappy Propensity to the same Vices. This so far prevailed with the Mother of *St. Bernard*, that she would not let her Son draw any Breasts but her own, least he should draw from them some Contagion of Vice. And the common Proverb, which expresses an Inveterate Habit of Vice, *By drinking it in with the Mothers Milk*, being grounded on universal Consent, gives great Authority to this Notion.

*Guil. Abb.  
in vit. Bern.  
l. i. c. i.*

§ 6. And *Dion Cassius* gives this account of the Prodigious Cruelty of *Caligula*, who was the Son of the Famous *Germanicus* and *Agrippina* the

the Daughter of *M. Agrippa*, two as Vertuous and Generous Persons as Heathen *Rome* could boast of. That to the end he might be of a Martial Disposition, they committed him to a *Masculine Nurse*, one that was Hairy on the Face like a Man, drew the long Bow, run at the Ring, managed the great Horse, and was in all things most Cruelly and Mischievously inclined. And from such a Nurse he became so in love with Blood, that he not only delighted to be present at the Execution of Criminals, but would lick the very Blood of the Weapons wherewith they were executed. And *Tiberius*, who was such a Monster for Leachery, is said to have been Nursed by one no less famous for Unchastity than the other for Cruelty. And I knew a Gentleman, who had been very Sandalous in his Life for Whoredom, and confessed in my presence, that his first Debauch was at Fourteen, with and through the

Enticements of his Lustful Nurse. Who would not think his Parents to blame, for turning him off to such a Monster? Since from his Mother perhaps he might have Sucked a more Happy Constitution, she being a very Chast and Vertuous Woman.

§ 7. Consider then, Ladies, what Assurance you have, that the Mercenary Nurse is not of a Vicious Disposition, and conclude it your Duty, not to put off your Child to any other, unless one from whom it may imbibe better Qualities than from your selves. And since few of those Nicer Dames, who decline this Office, think better of others than of themselves, I hope they will not be so unkind, as to venture their Children abroad, where they may be likely to draw in a Disposition to those Vices which they most abhor. I am much inclined to subscribe to the Opinion of Wise *Cato*, That for the most part *Noble Ma-*

*Plut. in  
Catone.*

*trons*



*trons are endued with more Vertuous Inclinations than the meaner sort.* And methinks for that reason they ought not to place out their Children with any Women of baser Allay, and less Vertuous Dispositions.

§ 8. And thus I have given you an account of the probable Mischievous Consequences of Nursing Children abroad, which are sufficient to persuade all that truly love their Family, or their Children, to forego that unjustifiable Custom. Unjustifiable I say, for I am sure none can justify themselves either in point of Prudence or Duty, if they still adhere to it. And this leads me to the last part of my undertaking, which shall be the subject of the next Chapter, The Insufficiency of the common Excuses alledged by those that decline the Nursing of their own Children.

## C H A P. V.

*In which are mentioned the Common Plea's for Nursing Children abroad: Together with the Insufficiency of them, and the true Causes thereof are represented.*

§ 1. **I** Come now in the last place to remonstrate, that the Causes for which the generality of those Mothers, that are capable and able, refuse to Nurse, are so far from excusing, that they more evidently demonstrate and aggravate to their Fault in so doing. For whatever Plea's are framed for them, they may be resolved into some of these three Sins, Luxury, Covetousness or Pride.

§ 2. First, Some of them proceed from and convince them of *Luxury*. For hitherto it is reasonable to reduce the pretended Fears of diminishing their Beauty, and prejudicing their Health by the disturbance of their Rest, and  
other

other Toils incident to the Care of an helpless Infant. For I dare appeal to any one, who impartially considers it, whether any thing but Luxury dictates this Pretence. For first, There is neither *Reason nor Experience* on their side, who pretend Nursing to be the Decay of a Womans Health or Beauty. The contrary is generally observed, That it helps the Appetite and Digestion, which is more likely to preserve both, than destroy either. I find it confirmed by the Experience of Learned Physicians, that oft Consumptive Persons have been cured by Nursing their Children; and such as at other times have looked Meagre and Pale, whilst they have Nursed have been Plump, Fleshy, and of a vivid Complexion. Whereas on the other hand, in drying their Breasts, Women very commonly run apparent Hazards of destroying not their Health only but their Lives. The unnatural stopping up

*Morton  
Phibisiel.  
l. i. c. 7.*

of these Fountains, occasions the corrupting of the Milk, and that corrupted Milk infecting the Blood, oft raises such a Ferment as produces a Fever, or some other Fatal Distemper. And none can think it Prudence to throw themselves into immature Death to avoid Wrinkles.

§ 3. Again Secondly, Granting that the Nursing of half a dozen Children should decay the Glory of the Face a Year or two sooner, *How could Beauty be better bestowed, than in such a Work of Piety toward her own Family and Posterity?* Nor do I see how those Ladies can justify themselves against the Charge of Vanity and Luxury, who prefer the colour of their own Face before the advancing of such important Interests. Did you ever see a vain Fop so enslaved to his neat Cloaths, that he declined Business most proper and necessary, for fear of some little spot falling on them, or any rude Motion

to

to disorder his Garniture? There is as much Vanity in being a Slave to a fair Skin, as to a gawdy Suit. The miraculous Beauty of *Sarah* in her old Age, and of the Blessed Virgin in Youth, were neither so overvalued, as to deter them from being Nurses. So that those may be concluded to value too highly the Smoothness and Superficial Glory of their Skin, who prefer it before the greatest Good of their Posterity.

§ 4. And Thirdly, For such as decline Nursing, *For fear of having their Rest disturbed, or being other ways overloaded,* there needs no other Argument than their own Apology, to convince them of *Softness and Luxury*. For what would any one judge of a Mother, whom he should hear wishing that some one could undergo the Sickneses attending the Conception, the Toil of bearing her Child in the Womb, and the Throes of Travel in her stead? Would he not conclude,  
That

That such an one had deeply imbibed the Counsel, which *Epicurus* is said somewhere by *Arrian* to have given his Scholars, to enjoy *the Pleasures of Marriage*, but by *all means avoid the trouble of Children*. Now if such a Wish argue too much Sensuality, How can they avoid that Imputation, who by throwing off as much of the Pains of a Mother as they can, make it apparent, that it is only from the Necessity of Nature that they decline no more? One that turns off her Child to be Nursed by a Stranger, for fear of taking Pains with it by Day, or being disturbed by it in the Night, evidences thereby, that she carried it in the Womb Forty Weeks, and underwent the Pangs of Child-birth, only because Nature in those cases could not admit of a Substitute. There is no Vertue in enduring those Pains for your Child which you cannot avoid: And there are some Pains God hath so contrived, that



that they may be avoided (these I mean that attend the Nursing of it) that by a voluntary undertaking of them, you may make it appear how little you value your Ease, when it stands in Competition with your Duty. For doubtless she loves her Ease too well, who will not undergo those Labours for her own Child, which he expects another should take for Wages. Our Holy Religion, as it requires the greatest Charity in all its Professors, so it prescribes *Labours of Love*; and consequently allows not of that over-great Tenderneſs to our selves, which is inconsistent with a *Laborious Charity*; especially to the most natural and nearest Objects of a Mothers Charity, her own Children.

§ 5. Lastly, *The Pretence of Inability to Nurse, is oft reducible to this Head of Luxury.* It is the common Plea of those Mothers, who put their Children out to Nurse, that either they want *Nipples or Milk*:

*Milk* : And though this may be really the case of some few, yet I am perswaded, not of all that pretend it. Such dry Breasts, as one observes, are like the Gout, which is frequent among the Rich, but a stranger among the Poor. Few of those Women who are too Poor to hire a Nurse, but they are able to Nurse themselves; and I make no question but many of our Rich and Honourable Dames, who pretend to want Suck or Nipples, would have had both if their Fortunes had been less. Now in all such, Luxury is the real Motive, though a Natural Inability be the Pre-

\* I might here add tence. \*

one Parti-

cular more reducible to this Head, which though many are ashamed to plead, hath yet a great Influence on them in declining their Duty: I mean the *Restraints* that the Discharge of it would bring on them. They cannot Dress exactly according to the Mode, if to give Suck they must be called so oft to open their Breasts: Nor will this be consistent with the Liberty they take to Revel and Game oft till after Midnight. But if the bare Proposal of this Plea do not convince and shame them that use it, I must despair of prevailing with them. But since I am sure there cannot be a better Argument to this Duty, than that it may be a means to restrain them from those Faults, I will not Despair.

§ 6. But that those Ladies, who have no better Plea's for the Neglect of this Duty, than these which so evidently convict them of Luxury, and too great a Fondness of their own Ease, will by a Serious Reflection upon this Consideration, persuade themselves rather to discharge this Duty for the future toward their Children, than to expose themselves to just Censure, by such Apologies for their Neglect. For (to conclude this first Cause) what is the true difference between a Modest Wife and an Adulteress? But that the first desires to bring forth a Child to the World, to be a Servant of God, a Citizen to the Commonwealth, and an Object for her Charity and Diligence; whilst the latter aims at no more than the gratifying of her leud Inclinations and base Lusts. And I need not to say, how near those Mothers come to this latter Character, who after the Consummation of Marriage,  
and

and the Birth of a Child (as if Lust were all they intended) decline the Labour and the Charity it gives them an opportunity to exercise towards it, and transfer them all upon another.

§ 7. Secondly, There is another Plea used for the declining of this Office, *which is the result of Avarice*, as the former is of *Luxury*, and made use of by the Trading part of the Nation, as those by the Gentry. The Nursing of a Child is looked on as too great a Confinement to the Wife, who by her Inspection over the Household Affairs, or Attendance in the Shop, may save her Husband much more than the Hire of a Nurse amounts to. But granting this, if (as hath been shewed) Nursing be the Mothers Duty, no prospect of gaining by the neglect can supersede her Obligation to it. And if I understand the Nature of Covetousness, it is such a Love of Gain as this, that draws one to the neglect of  
any

any Obligation, which is not consistent with his Profit. The Question is not, Whether it may be as Conducive to your Temporal Interest, but whether it be as Consistent with your Duty, to put out your Child to a Stranger, as to Nurse it your self. And if Avarice be excluded from the Consult, you must conclude, that other business ought to give place to this, which is so properly the Business of a Mother. For unless you love your Child too little, and your Gain too much, you will be sensible, that if your Infant be spoiled, or suffer any Prejudice in Body or Mind, you can be no Gainers, though your Domestick Business, or your Shop should be better attended.

§ 8. Lastly, I humbly recommend it to the Consideration of all Mothers, especially Persons of Quality, whether by adhering to this unnatural Custom, they do not shew themselves *Guilty of a great deal of Pride*. You think it  
below

below you to stoop to the Office of a meaner Mother, and therefore, as a piece of State, and Punctilio of Honour, turn off the Drudgery of Nursing to another. For if this were not a very prevailing Motive, the *Great and Honourable* would not be so universally conformable to this unreasonable Custom. But may they not as reasonably conclude it too great a Condescension to become a Mother as a Nurse? For there is the same equality between the most Honourable Lady and her Child, as between the meanest Beggar and hers; and there is no more reason why the best should think Scorn to Nurse her own at her Breast, than to bear it in her Womb. Let then those whom God hath advanced into a Superior Rank in the World, learn to have Modest Thoughts of themselves, and they will be ashamed to let such vain Punctilio's of Honour and Greatness influence them.

Let



Let such remember that the Laws of God and Nature equally oblige the Lady as the Beggar, the City as the Country Dame; and they will resolve not to plead the Fantastick Privilege of their Quality, against the Good of their Children and their own Duty. God expects that the greatest Lady, when she becomes a Mother, should do the Duties of a Mother; and she certainly *thinks of her self more highly than she ought to think*, whoever is so Vain, as to fancy it below her to do her Duty. And if *Luxury, Avarice* and *Pride*, be the true Causes of this Customs universal Prevailence, whatever are the Pretences, it must needs be concluded inexcusably Sinful: Which was the last thing I undertook to prove.

## The Conclusion.

*Wherein a Pathetick Address is made to all, both Fathers and Mothers, that they will admit the preceding Particulars into their Serious and Impartial Consideration.*

§ 1. **I**T only remains, that I wind up this Discourse with a Serious Admonition to all those whom God hath honoured with the Title of Parents, that they will allow it an Impartial Consideration.

§ 2. And first I shall speak to all Mothers, because they are Primarily and Principally concern'd. And methinks the very name might supercede the Repetition of all other Arguments. For what is the Import of a *Mother*? Why is the Earth stiled the common Mother of all things, but that it Nourishes all that it produceth? And do not all other Beings the same, whether Animate or Inanimate?

Do

Do not Grapes hang on the Vine,  
and Fruits on the Trees that produced them, taking their Increase  
from the Sap of the Wood, to  
which they owe their Original?  
And among Animals, Doth not  
the Lamb know its own Dam,  
and run to her Dug among a  
Thousand in the same Flock?  
Nay even Savage Lions and Bears  
stand tamely to be Sucked by  
their young Cubs. The Philoso-  
pher *Favorinus* was then in the <sup>A. Gell.</sup>  
right, when he stiled her *but half* <sup>l. 12. c. 1.</sup>  
*a Mother*, who Nourishes in her  
Womb what she knows not, and  
consequently doth not yet love,  
but casts it off as soon as she  
knows it, and first begins to love  
it. Nay she is not to be reputed so  
much as half a Mother, since the  
Nurse doth longer communicate  
Constituent Nourishment to her  
Child from her Body in Twelve  
Months, than the Mother in Nine.  
And how, Ladies, would you re-  
sent it, if your Child should refuse

to call you *Mother*, or own any other Woman to be more its Mother than you? If this would grieve or vex you, methinks you should be asham'd, that any other should have done more of the Office of a Mother for it than your self.

§ 3. Next to your relation to your Child, let me *remind you of your Religion*, which recommends the greatest Charity to Strangers and Enemies. And how can it be consistent with your Profession of Christianity, which obliges you to love your Enemies, to be defective in your Love to your nearest Relations? Look then, unkind Mothers, look on your poor Infant newly thrust out of your Womb, how Helpless and Forlorn it is. Hear the Lamentations wherewith it begins the World. What are those cries, but the best ways it hath to implore your Pity, sollicit your further Care, and to beg of you, now that it is excluded from the Womb, to entertain it in your Bosom?

Bosom? Look on your own Breasts, which soon after the Birth spring full of Milk. Did Nature intend no more in this, but to put you to the trouble of drying them? Or did it design you should supply your Babe from that Store which she hath provided? It had been much more wisely contrived, for you to have been without Breasts and Receptacles for Milk, if now you have them replenished, it will be the best to deprive your selves of them. Is it not then a bold Reflection on the Divine Wisdom, to act as if you could have contrived the parts of your Bodies better than he hath done? If then you cannot be so far forsaken of Reason, as to imagine that the Author of your Being intended your Breasts only for needless Excesses, much less Snares and Temptations to your selves and others; as oft as you look on them remember their proper use; and resolve not to suffer your Child to want what Nature hath enabled

you to supply it with. It is now removed out of your Womb into your Arms, and the Meat which Nourished it there, follows it to your Breasts, that it may be preserved by the Principles of its Constitution. Let not those parts then serve only to minister to Pride and Wantonness, which are so apparently intended by God for your Infants Sustentation.

§ 4. I acknowledge there are but very few Persons of Quality that stoop to this Employment; but this ought not to discourage you from it, but rather confirm your Resolution to undertake it, as it gives you an opportunity to shew your selves *Singularly good Mothers*. Piety is then truly Heroick, when it dare own a neglected Duty, and rather be laugh'd at, than deserve to be reprov'd. And if Custom were a conclusive Argument in all cases, there are very few Vices but might plead it as well as this. And your Husbands have

as



as good a Plea for the Vices you most dislike (such as Drunkenness, keeping Mistresses, &c.) as you have for hiring other Women to Nurse your Children. Those Vices may plead Custom among the Men, as this among the Women of Quality. Oppose then this evil Custom among Women by your Example, and make the Experiment, whether you can hereby teach the Men, as well as your own Sex, to be ashamed of wicked Fashions. For who knows how much your Illustrious Example may contribute to the overthrowing of Vile Customs, and the restoring of Credit to neglected Duties.

§ 5. In a word, Let me beseech you to consider, how ye can answer to God, your Families, or your Country, the Omission of this Duty: If your slighting of Natures Dictates occasion any of the forementioned Mischiefs to the best Families and greatest Hopes of the Nation; for such we may reckon the

Children of our Nobility and Gentry to be.

¶ 6. Especially, Let me intreat you once more to consider, how many Children this Custom Murders every Year, and what *an Hue and Cry* of Innocents Blood there is against it, which may well overtake the Abettors of it with Divine Vengeance. Murder is an Horrid Crime, but Parricide is worse. We detect the Wickedness and Cruelty of a poor Wretch, who to hide her Shame strangles her Bastard. And how much better are those Mothers, who without so great a Temptation (only to gratifie their Luxury or Ease) resign up their Children, the hopes of their Family and the Nation, to the Slaughter? If there were as much Natural Affection among *our Nicer Dames*, as once there was in the *Mothers of Bethlehem*, there would be as many *Rachels* among them Weeping for the Slaughter of their Innocent Babes. Especially since not a Cruel  
*Herod*

*Herod* is the *Tyrant* and *Assassinate*, but themselves. Nor is this any Vain, much less Uncharitable Supposition, since it is obvious to common Observation, that though those Mothers who do not Nurse, generally bring forth more Children, yet fewer of them arrive to Maturity and survive them; which cannot be imputed so much to the Frequency of Production (since they are usually brought forth as strong and lively as others) as to the ill Nursing of them by Strangers. And if we justly detest their Inhumane Idolatry, who offered up their Children in the Fiery Embraces of *Moloch* (since it is no more excusable to make such Sacrifices to Luxury than to Superstition) methinks it should be a very Melancholly Consideration to all Mothers, that the Lives of many Thousand poor Innocents, even in this one Nation, are Sacrificed every Year for the Support of this Luxurious and Unnatural Custom.

§ 7. But I must confess there is one Case very necessary to be considered, which hath not yet been mentioned, viz. *That very oft the Father is unwilling that his Wife should undertake this Office.* And if he will not consent to her Nursing, how can she do the Duty of a Wife, unless she wave this Office of a Mother? In answer to this I have this only to return, That all I have hitherto aimed at in this Discourse, is to persuade Mothers to be willing to Nurse their Children: If this be effected, all I have to add is, That if any Husband be Obstinate in refusing to permit it, the Wifes Duty is, to be obedient to him, and leave him to answer for the Neglect, which she cannot help. But that this may not hereafter be any ones Case, I shall put an end to this Tract,

§ 8. Secondly, By an earnest Address to *all Fathers*, that they do not put their Wives upon such an Unhappy Strait by their Perverse  
Obstinacy,

Obstinacy, but rather (as becomes their Duty) encourage them to undertake and assist them all they can in performing this Office. You have, Sirs, an equal Concern with your Wives in all the precedent Arguments. If the Word of God and the Law of Nature oblige them to Nurse, it obliges you to teach them their Duty, or at least to encourage them to practise it, and not hinder them from it. And whatever Mischiefs redound to your Family, or your Child, by drawing the Breast of a Stranger, they equally concern you as her, and (unless you have put off Reason, together with Humanity and Natural Affection) must produce in you a very Sensible Resentment. So that you are as much obliged to prevent them as she, and all the Guilt is justly to be laid at your door, if it happen through your means that she doth not. Most of the Pains and Toil of Nursing is hers, and if your Rest  
be

be sometimes broken, you are very Soft and Luxurious indeed, if you grudge to endure much more than that for your Childs good. Nay you are very Churlish and Unkind to her, if you contribute not all you can to make her Duty as easie as may be to her. . *Abraham*'s Joy at the Weaning of his Son, is an Evidence he was well pleased that *Sarah* had Nursed him. And *Elkanah*, who before obliged his Wives constantly to accompany him to the Tabernacle, readily consents to *Hannahs* stay at home for the Nursing of her Son. No sooner doth she move it, but he answers, *Do as seemeth thee good.* And if all Husbands were in this like *Abraham* and *Elkanah*, the most Wives would be like *Sarah* and *Hannah*, as ready, I mean, to Nurse as they. It is very rare that any Wife refuses this Office, when her Husband is desirous she would undertake it; much more when he perswades and encourages

Gen. 21.8.

1 Sam. 1.  
23.



rages her, by the Provision of all convenient Helps and Assistance for her.

§ 9. In a word, A Custom so inveterate as this is, will not be so effectually broke, as by a Mutual Concurrence of both the *Father* and the *Mother*. If the *Mother* be desirous to Nurse, few *Fathers* will be so Morose and Unnatural as to refuse their Consent: Or if the *Father* be Solicitous that the *Mother* her self should do this Office for his Son, there are not many *Women* so in love with their own Ease, or forgetful of their Childrens Advantage, as to decline it. But where both desire it, they will be Meet-helps indeed, and afford such mutual Encouragement, as will make all the Fatigues of it Easie and Delightful. And Delightful, I dare undertake, it will be to both, if there be in them the least Spark of Good Nature. There is such a Fascination in the Innocent Postures,

Postures, and Gradual Appearances of Reason, the pretty Smiles and confused Jargon, the calm Endearments and unfeigned Love of these little Innocents, that the Wisest Men have found a Satisfactory Diversion in their Company. And if any one questions this, let him forbear to Censure, till he have made trial of this Pleasure of a Father: As *Agessilaus* once answered one, who laughed at him for condescending to Play with his Son. For I have known some Fathers at first very Averse to their Wives Nursing, who after Experience of those Pleasing Diversions, that are to be found in the constant Company of a little Babe, would not on any Terms lose the Repetition of that Pleasure, by turning the next abroad to a Strange Nurse.

§ 10. Thus have I finished my Undertaking, and doubt not but I have said enough to demonstrate

*Ælian.*  
*var. Hist.*  
l. 12. c. 15.

## *The Compleat Mother.*

11

strate my Sincere Compassion for the Exposed Infants of Great and Honourable Parents; enough to vindicate those few Mothers, who by performing this Office themselves, have provoked the Scoffs of the rest; and enough to discharge mine own Duty in reminding them of theirs, according to my slender Ability; which were all the ends I could propose to my self, with any Assurance of Success. But if the Divine Blessing make these Papers more Successful, if it so direct these few small Stones, taken out of a Shepherds Scrip, as to Foil a Gigantick Inveterate Custom, and prevail on any, though never so few Ladies, to become Nurses, I shall hope for a compleat Victory from *their Example*, which I cannot from my *Discourse*. Let but a few more truly Generous and Noble Matrons, come in and joyn with those few that have already begun to set  
this

this Age a good Example; and such a bright Constellation cannot but be took notice of, and have a vigorous Influence to render it as Fashionable for the future, for Ladies to Discharge this their Duty, as it is at present to Neglect it.

F I N I S.

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